

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief Financial Officers/Management Budget Chiefs

FROM: R. J. Dominic
Director, Finance Office/Comptroller

SUBJECT: International Invitational Traveler's Advances by U. S. Debit Card;
Policy Number 01-P-01

As mentioned in previous correspondence, Treasury Regulations required that cash held in imprest funds be eliminated by October 1, 2001. Because of this requirement, the Finance Office has established procedures to pilot the use of U. S. Debit Cards to provide international invitational travelers with travel advances. During the pilot, debit cards will be issued by the Finance Office in Germantown and the WASC Financial Management Division in Seattle.

The responsibilities/procedures, along with points of contact, are transmitted for your use. A sample Travel Authorization and Travel Voucher are also included for ease of understanding.

Please contact Lois Coleman or Frank Greci at (301) 413-8591 with any questions concerning these procedures.

cc:

OFA231 - Keith E. Schellhase
OFA231 - Mark J. St. Clair
OFA241 - Robyn C. Bramhall
CC1 - Marilyn S. Dejarnatt
EC1 - Michael G. Daniels
MC1 - Steven J. Robar
WC1 - Jennifer D. Williams

Attachments

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION PILOT U. S. DEBIT CARD PROGRAM

The Finance Office has entered into an agreement with the Department of Treasury to pilot the use of U. S. Debit Cards for advances to international invitational travelers (IIT) who are foreign citizens traveling in support of NOAA programs at NOAA's expense. The debit cards can be used by IITs for purchases at retail locations, ATM cash withdrawals and long distance telephone calls.

The Accounting Operations Division (AOD), Finance Office, Germantown, Maryland, and the Financial Management Division, Western Administrative Support Center (WASC), Seattle, Washington, will issue the debit cards.

Line/Staff Offices which need to provide travel funds to IITs will predetermine travel costs and prepare a travel authorization and voucher. They can request the issuance of a debit card by sending the original signed travel authorization and voucher to AOD or WASC at least 1 week prior to the start of travel. If the Line/Staff Office cannot obtain the signature of the IIT prior to travel, AOD or WASC will accept travel vouchers with an approving official's signature until such time that the traveler can sign. Expenses on the travel voucher can be estimated from the requirements authorized on the travel authorization. In addition to these expenses, the travel voucher should include an additional \$15.00 to cover transaction fees which will be deducted directly from the debit card balance when it is used by the traveler for ATM cash withdrawals, balance inquiries, point of sale transactions, and long distance calls.

The AOD and WASC will load the funds, as requested on the travel authorization and voucher, onto the debit card and provide it to the Line/Staff Office point of contact. The Line/Staff Office point of contact will then provide the debit card to the traveler. AOD and WASC will monitor the use of the card and the dates on the travel voucher in order to deactivate the card upon completion of travel. At the completion of travel, AOD and WASC will use the travel voucher to schedule payment to the Department of Treasury contractor which provides the debit cards and the system for issuing and maintaining them. The Line/Staff Office will be charged at the completion of travel for the funds which were actually used by the traveler, not the amount which was loaded on the debit card. AOD and WASC will adjust the travel voucher to show the amount actually spent and provide a copy to the Line/Staff Office.

If the Line/Staff Office determines that the travel will be extended, they should contact AOD or WASC to ensure the debit card is not deactivated on the travel voucher end date. If the Line/Staff Office determines that the traveler will need more funds than originally loaded on the debit card, they should send a reclaim voucher to AOD or WASC to ensure that additional funds are loaded.

LINE OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES

To participate in the debit card program, Line/Staff Offices are responsible for the following:

1. notify the Finance Office of points of contact (POC) within the Line/Staff Office;
2. prepare a Travel Authorization and Travel Voucher in accordance with Attachments 1 and 2 (the signed Travel Authorization and Voucher will be used to authorize the issuance of the debit card);
3. ensure that the amount on the Travel Voucher equals the amount needed for the travel advance plus an additional \$15.00 for transaction fees, and note on the travel voucher that payment goes to the servicing contractor, Chase Manhattan Bank. The amount of the debit card may not exceed \$2,500 per card. Cards may be reloaded after usage, but no card, at any time, may exceed \$2,500.
4. notify the AOD or WASC point of contact by e-mail of the request for a debit card issuance at least 1 week in advance;
5. enter the Travel Voucher into the Integrated Travel Manager (ITM) system and keep copies of the approved Travel Authorization and signed Travel Voucher;
6. provide the AOD or WASC with the approved original Travel Authorization and Travel Voucher signed by the traveler, if possible, and approving official at least one week prior to the need for the issuance of the debit card because the servicing finance office will not be able to process last minute authorizations and vouchers in a timely manner. (Debit card activation will coincide with the beginning of travel);
7. ensure that card recipients are provided with a U. S. Debit Card and all necessary disclosures, instructions and other cardholder communications on the use of U. S. Debit Cards. The servicing finance office will send the Line/Staff Office POC a set of instructions for issuance to the traveler. The Line/Staff Office POC will be responsible for maintaining copies of the disclosures and instructions, and providing a copy to each traveler;
8. keep a log of cards and their issuance to prevent theft, fraudulent use or misuse of cards and PINs. The Line/Staff Office POC must ensure that only designated officials with appropriate authority learn of and handle cards and PINS. Cards must be handled as if they were cash. Therefore, the Line/Staff Office POC should keep a receipt signed by the recipient on file with the other travel documents.

9. notify AOD or WASC if travel is extended to avoid automatic deactivation which will occur the day following the scheduled travel completion date unless the Finance Office is notified.
10. notify AOD or WASC by e-mail when submitting a signed Reclaim Voucher requesting additional funds to be loaded on the debit card;
11. report promptly **any** problems or concerns to AOD or WASC;
12. submit a Reclaim Voucher, with receipts, signed by the traveler and approving official, if the traveler needs reimbursement for using personal funds;
13. notify AOD or WASC to bill the traveler if the Line/Staff Office chooses to recover an over-payment;
14. provide AOD or WASC with an amended authorization and voucher for any trip changes;
15. delete the travel voucher from the ITM and cancel the travel authorization by creating an amendment in the ITM when a trip is canceled;
16. participate in pilot evaluations; and
17. assist in the reconciliation of Treasury reports, when requested to do so by the servicing finance office.

**ACCOUNTING OPERATIONS DIVISION
POINTS OF CONTACT**

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| Name: Linda Mervicker | Shirley Hanna |
| Phone: (301) 427-3057, x111 | (301) 427-3056, x159 |
| E-mail: Linda.L.Mervicker@noaa.gov | Shirley.Hanna@noaa.gov |

**WASC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT DIVISION
POINTS OF CONTACT**

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| Name: Merna Grantham | Colleen Lee |
| Phone: (206) 526-4426 | (206) 526-6203 |
| E-mail: Merna.S.Grantham@noaa.gov | Colleen.Lee@noaa.gov |

FINANCE OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES

Accounting Operations Division and WASC Financial Management Division must:

18. maintain a list of Line/Staff Office points of contacts;
19. keep a log of cards and their issuance to prevent theft, fraudulent use, or misuse of cards up to the amount authorized on the card or PINs in its possession or issued to cardholders; ensure the physical and policy controls over card stock inventories and preprinted forms, if applicable, to assure that only persons with appropriate authority learn of and handle cards and PINs. Cards must be handled as if they were cash;
20. ensure that adequate card stock is on hand;
21. report promptly any problems or concerns to the Treasury's servicing contractor;
22. ensure the correctness of all U. S. Debit Card activations;
23. activate/load the U. S. Debit Card upon receipt of a signed international invitational travel authorization and travel voucher. Travel authorizations and travel vouchers must be received at least 1 week prior to the need for the issuance of the debit card. The debit card will be activated, not to exceed \$2,500, on the day that travel starts;
24. ensure that the Line/Staff Office is provided with a U. S. Debit Card, after receipt of proper documentation, and a set of all necessary disclosures, instructions and other cardholder communications on the use of U. S. Debit Cards (debit cards will be transmitted to the requesting office by the most expeditious means) for issuance to the traveler;
25. keep a log of all debit card issuances/activations/modifications/deactivations;
26. ensure that the original travel voucher is data linked (processed into the Core Financial System) prior to approving a reclaim voucher (reclaim vouchers cannot be approved for pickup during the same data link as the original);
27. compare the hard copy travel voucher with the electronic travel voucher to ensure that the two are still in agreement prior to approving the electronic travel voucher in ITM;
28. approve the travel voucher in ITM after the trip has been completed;
29. deactivate the debit card and settle the travel voucher no later than the first workday following the completion of travel (the amount of the debit card that was used will be paid to the Treasury's account at Chase Manhattan Bank - any funds on the card that were not used will be canceled);

Note: The voucher in CFS must be paid in it's entirety to the traveler or to the Chase Manhattan Bank. The voucher in CFS cannot be split between two vendors.

30. notify Line/Staff Office of any adjustment to the travel voucher based on a deactivated debit card balance;
31. keep copies of all documentation;
32. perform independent audits of the program;
33. reconcile reports received from Treasury's servicing contractor; and
34. participate in pilot evaluations.